

BUT WHERE IS THE LAMB?

Title: *The REAL Big Bang*, Pt 6

Series: Intimacy

March 31 - April 1, 2018 ser#3720 (EASTER) Sat SunE SunL

I. POINT OF INTRIGUE

A. Light moments:

I did an Internet search for Easter jokes. They were so lame. Seriously! However, since I spent considerable time trying to find a few worthy “light moments” to share, I thought I’d let you in on my painful experience. LOL! Are you ready?

1. What kind of music does the Easter bunny like?
2. What do you call an Easter bunny with a large brain?
3. Did you hear God’s dead?
4. How does the word Easter end?

ANSWERS: Hip Hop, Egghead, April fools and “R – Resurrection.”

B. Next week we introduce a HUGE digital screen experience as Straight-Line, Liquid and GCCC share three seven minute homilies with three minutes of testimonies testifying to what God did during our *FAST – 40 Days to Breakthrough*.

testifying to what God did during our *FAST* – *40 Days to Breakthrough.*

Take your GCCC News, open it to the Pastor's page and take note of "Reflections on So Loved." That's just a taste of things to come—the meal has just begun. And the Church said, "Amen!"

C. We're going to take what is typically called "Bomb Sunday," and make it a Wow Experience!" LORD willing I'll see you next week.

D. Let's pray!

II. SERIES #2 – INTIMACY

A. Our text

Genesis 21: 1-7

The Birth of Isaac

1 Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what He had promised. **2** Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had **promised** him.

THE SETTING: Abraham, Sarah's husband, was 75 years old when God promised to make of him a great nation (*Genesis 12:1-2*).

Ten years later—still no child—Abraham's nephew, Lot, is captured along with all that he owned. Abraham, whose name at this point in his life is Abram, took his household army (318 trained men), defeated five kings and rescued Lot and all of his belongings.

Right after Abram's victory, he meets with God in the person of a man—Christ before His incarnation. They break bread and drink wine. What's that symbolic of?



bread and drink wine.
What's that symbolic of?

Holy Communion.

Intimacy. **(show photo)**



At that time Abram gives the God-man a tithe/tenth of all that he has.

Immediately after this God tells Abram that He, God, is Abram's shield and great reward. Abram replies, "How can that be since I am childless." Remember, Abram is 85.

God then promises him a son and offspring like the stars in the skies.

Genesis 15:6 tells us, "Abram believed the LORD, and God credited it Abram as righteousness." **(Romans 4:3 & 22)**

Immediately after Abram's high—you know that's got to be a high—Sarah suggested that maybe God wants to fulfill His promise through Hagar, her young, beautiful, handmaiden. Certainly, God can't do it through her, she's 76.

B. Oh, there's a lesson here! Satan always strikes IMMEDIATELY after a spiritual high. I know that is true in my own life; for EVERY spiritually sensitive moment during this "fast," temptation was as equally strong.

There were times during this fast, when I thought: "You've got to be kidding—I'm fasting. The temptation should be less not greater."

ILLUSTRATION: Jim Atkinson was giving final words of encouragement to the cast just before the final performance on Sunday. I remember his last thought: "*Beware! Today you're on a high. Guaranteed, tomorrow the enemy will strike.*" Wow! How true!

Satan always follows up the high with the lie. **[R]** He lied to Abram through his wife, Sarah, and Abram bought the lie.



wife, Sarah, and Abram bought the lie.

Think about it! The same thing happened to Adam in the garden. **(show photo)**



Maybe God is trying to teach us men to be men, to be the spiritual head of our homes.

I'm convinced that our culture is where it is today because men have failed to assume and live out their God-given roles: *protector*, *provider* and *priest* of our homes. We have far too many single-parent homes today because men have abandoned their responsibilities as husbands and fathers.

Hey, GUYS, as Christ followers let's be Men of Valor. Let's be different; let's make a difference. And the Church said, "Amen!"

C. Here's the beauty of our God. God gave Adam and Eve and Abram and Sarah a chance to redeem themselves—and all thanks to a *merciful, kind* and *compassionate* God (as the "Seacher" said in *So Loved*), they made good on their second chance. **AND SO CAN YOU!**

I don't know where you've blown it, but if God can give Abram and Sarah a second chance at the ages of 99 and 89, there's hope for you and me.

Here's one other ENCOURAGING truth. It's called "the death of a vision." God gives us—you and me—a dream, a vision. We plow ahead trying to accomplish it *on* our own, *in* our own strength. Along the way the whole thing falls apart. You're in good company. It happened to:

Abraham – he was going to be the father of many nations. How could that happen without children? The vision dies; the dream fades into oblivion. Let's help God out. The result—Ishmael.

Moses – he was going to be Israel's deliverer. He killed an Egyptian and had to run for his life. The

Moses – he was going to be Israel’s deliverer. He killed an Egyptian and had to run for his life. The vision died; the dream faded.

But in both cases, as Abraham and Moses trusted and relied on God, what God had promised came to pass. Ah, we’re getting closer to the Easter story.

D. Back to our setting! I know it’s taken a long time to set this table. But it will be worth the meal. Just watch!

At the age of 99—say that with me, “99,” God appears to Abraham, again, and tells him that at the same time next year he and Sarah are going to have a child. (*Genesis 17*)

You say, PB, what’s this have to do with Easter?

Hang in there. Just watch!

3 Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him. **4** When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God commanded him. **5** Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.

6 Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.” **7** And she added, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

TODAY, IN MOST CASES, WE GIVE OUR KIDS NAMES WE LIKE. But, in those days people named their children for the moment. Isaac means ‘laughter’. We named our children Joel and Noel because we liked the names, and we gave them both our middle names because they were from our incarnation of love.

In Isaac’s case—can’t you hear it? So, tell me Isaac, why did your parents name you “laughter?” “Well, Dad was 100 and Mom was 90,” Isaac replies. No need for further explanation. Right? Right!

E. Ok, let’s fast forward to the Easter in this text

E. Ok, let's fast forward to the Easter in this text.

III. OUR TEXT (Let's stand.) GENESIS 22

Abraham Tested

1 Some time later God tested Abraham.

“Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

LET'S CONNECT THE DOTS! Was Jesus' God's only son? (Yes.) Did the Father love His only Son? (Yes.) Was Jesus crucified in the plains or on a hill? (A hill.) Can I say—40 different authors over 1500 years; only God could write this book we call the Bible.

3 Early the **next** morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. ... **4** On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance.

LET'S CONNECT A FEW MORE DOTS. How many thieves were crucified with Jesus? (Two.) How many days was Jesus in the tomb? (Three.) Only God could write this book we call the Bible.

6 Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife.

THE PICTURE: The Cross (wood) and the knife (“He was pierced for our transgressions.”)

As the two of them went on together, **7** Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, “Father?”

“Yes, my son?” Abraham replied.

“The fire and wood are here,” Isaac said, “**but where is the lamb** for the burnt offering?”

8 Abraham answered, “God Himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” ... **13** Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed

looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. **14** So Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

IV. FINAL THOUGHTS



A. Where is it *your* God-given vision has been shattered? Your dream faded into oblivion? Don't give up!

There's a ram in the thicket. **(show photo)** Persistence and perseverance are evidence of faith and faith pleases God.

ONE WORD OF CAUTION! In most cases HOW God fulfills the vision and WHEN God brings it to pass won't be on YOUR terms. It wasn't in the case of Abraham and it wasn't in the case of Moses. His ways are neither our ways nor His thoughts our thoughts. He simply asks us to be faithful and obedient.

B. The same is true of salvation. If it were you or I, would we have saved the world through shame, suffering and humility? Or would we have saved the world through dignity, triumph and pride? Yet it was through...

His suffering we are set free

His shed blood we have forgiveness of sins

His death that we live.

V. INVITATION

The outstanding questions are: Have you received Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins? Have you given your life to Christ?

Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins? Have you given your life to Christ?

Roman's 10:9-10 tells us:

If you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; **10** for with the heart a man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

John 1:12

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name,

Here's how:

Admit— your sins have separated you from God. (**Psa 14:1-3; Rom 3: 23**); **Believe** – that God did something about your sins through Jesus Christ. (The final Pascal Lamb/Messiah.) (**Lev 17:10; Heb 9: 19-22**); **Commit** – yourself to His righteous by confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior. (**Isa 53:5; Col 1:22**); **Do it today!** (**Isa 49:8; 2 Cor 6:2**).

Father in Heaven, I'm sorry for the things I've done that are wrong: I am a sinner; forgive me. Thank You for loving me and sending your Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for my sin. Holy Spirit, come into my heart; Jesus be my Lord and Savior. I give You my life. Amen!
